United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1499
14 October 1993

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, expressing concern that continuation of conflict in and around Nagorny Karabakh and of tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan would endanger peace in the region, calls on parties to make cease-fire permanent and to refrain from hostile acts which could lead to widening of conflict.

+ Secretary-General, beginning Africa visit, attends meeting in Cairo with Secretaries-General of OAU, Arab League and Organization of Islamic Conference; participants reaffirm commitment to aiding peace and reconciliation process in Somalia.

+ Secretary-General "elated" after release of American and Nigerian soldiers held captive in Somalia; Under-Secretary-General Jonah, in Mogadishu, has meetings with Special Representative Howe, Somali leaders and United States Envoy Oakley.

+ General Committee recommends inclusion of item on "Building a peaceful and better world through sport" in General Assembly agenda; OAU, co-sponsor of item, suggests that 1994 be proclaimed international year of sport and Olympic ideals.

* * *

The Security Council this evening called upon the parties to the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic to make effective and permanent the cease-fire they established with the assistance of the Russian Federation and the Minsk Group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). In unanimously adopting resolution 874 (1993), the Council expressed concern that a continuation of the conflict and of the tensions between the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan would endanger peace and security in the region. It urged all States in the region to refrain from any hostile acts and from any interference or intervention which would lead to such a widening of the conflict.

The Council called on the parties to immediately implement the "Adjusted timetable of urgent steps" to implement its resolutions which was set out at

(more)

the 28 September meeting of the CSCE Minsk Group. Those include the withdrawal of forces from recently occupied territories and the removal of all obstacles to communication and transportation. It also called for an early convening of the CSCE Minsk Conference with the aim of arriving at a negotiated settlement of the conflict. By the resolution, it requests the Secretary-General to send a representative to the Conference, and to provide all possible assistance for the substantive negotiations that will ensue.

Expressing its grave concern at the suffering caused by the conflict, the Council called on all the parties involved to refrain from violating international humanitarian law and to allow unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in all the areas affected by the conflict. It also requested the Secretary-General and relevant international agencies to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the affected civilian population and to assist refugees and displaced people to return to their homes in security and dignity.

The Council took note of the high-level meetings in Moscow on 8 October and expressed the hope that they would contribute to the improvement of the situation and to the peaceful settlement of the conflict. It reiterated its full support for the peace process being pursued within the framework of the CSCE and the "tireless efforts" of its Minsk Group.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today began his visit to Africa in Cairo, where he attended a meeting with the Secretaries-General of the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, according to a United Nations spokesman. The meeting, which was hosted by the Chairman of the OAU, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, was called to discuss efforts to help and promote peace and reconciliation in Somalia.

In a joint statement issued afterwards, the participants reaffirmed their joint determination to continue to search for common solutions to the problems of Somalia. They recalled that under the Addis Ababa Agreement of 27 March, Somali political leaders had committed themselves to continuing the peace process, under the auspices of the United Nations and in cooperation with regional organizations and neighbouring countries.

The participants stressed their commitment to advancing the process of reconciliation and rebuilding begun by the Somali leaders, and to the principles of cooperation and peace. They also stressed their commitment to pursuing a coordinated and comprehensive approach in the search for solutions to the country's problems, and invited all Somali parties to cooperate in that regard.

Before arriving in Cairo, the Secretary-General stopped over in Paris, where he met with the French Prime Minister. They discussed the situations in

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, Somalia and Rwanda, and the Secretary-General underlined the importance of France's contribution to the work of the United Nations, especially in the peace-keeping field.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was "elated" after the unconditional release today of Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant, an American national, and Umar Shantali, a Nigerian soldier, who had been held captive by Somali militiamen in Mogadishu, according to a United Nations spokesman. The two soldiers were turned over to the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) II by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Mr. Durant had several broken bones and underwent surgery today, and would be flown to Germany tomorrow. Mr. Shantali was expected to return to his contingent.

In related news, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, James Jonah, met in Mogadishu this morning wtih the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Jonathan Howe, and the Deputy Special Representative, Lansana Kouyate. According to a United Nations spokesman, Mr. Jonah and Ambassador Kouyate met later with Somali leaders, including Ali Mahdi and representatives of the Group of Twelve, factions which signed the Addis Ababa accords. They discussed the situation in Mogadishu and how to resolve the current problems there. Mr. Jonah also met later with the United States Special Envoy, Robert Oakley.

The spokesman also reported that consultations on the establishment of Somalia's third Regional Council, serving the Middle Shabelle region, have been completed and that the Council would be inaugurated on Saturday.

* * *

The General Committee this morning recommended that an item on "Building a peaceful and better world through sport" be included in the agenda of the General Assembly, acting on a request by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and Egypt.

Introducing the item, Dawlat Ibrahim Hassan (Egypt) said that the OAU, at its summit in Cairo last July, had endorsed an appeal by the International Olympic Committee that it support such an approach. She said the OAU had also decided to ask the General Assembly to proclaim 1994 the international year dedicated to sport and Olympic ideals, on the understanding that it would not involve any expenditure by the United Nations or its Member States. Ms. Hassan said that although celebration of the year would be organized at the national and international level and at no cost to the United Nations, the Organization's support would help promote its goals. The Assembly will consider the proposal tomorrow morning.

* *** *